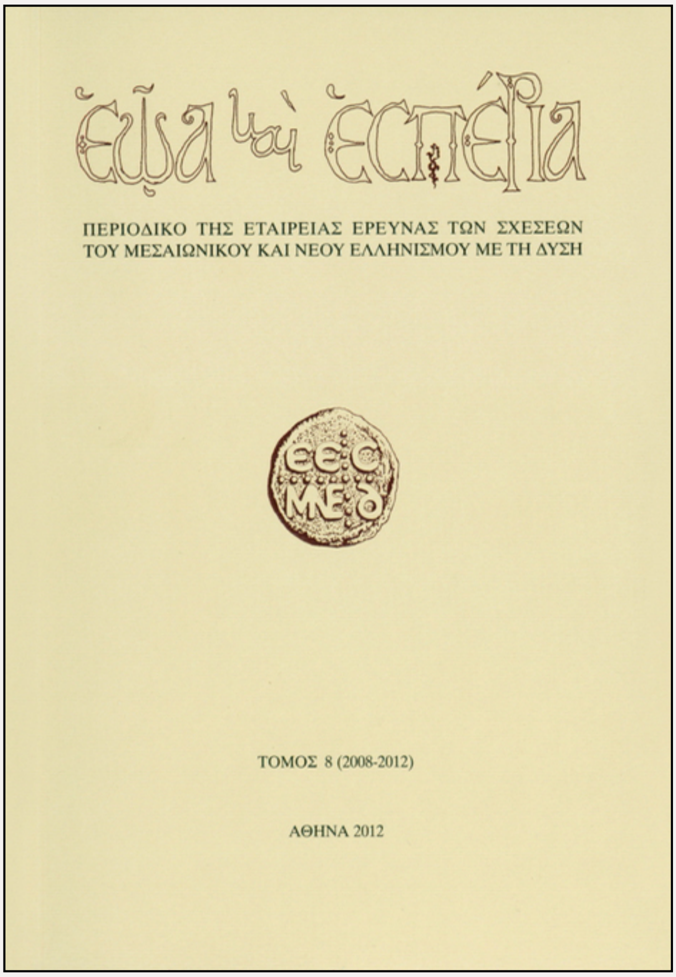
Eoa kai Esperia

Vol. 8, 2012



THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE (CA. 600-1200): I.3. APOTHEKAI OF AFRICA AND SICILY, FINAL NOTES AND CONCLUSIONS

RAGIA EFI

https://doi.org/10.12681/eoaesperia.13

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE (CA. 600-1200): I.3. APOTHEKAI OF AFRICA AND SICILY, FINAL NOTES AND CONCLUSIONS

Africa and Sicily

The changes undergone by the administration of Africa after its incorporation in the Byzantine Empire in the sixth century do not present serious problems, even though details are lacking and questions can be raised concerning specific side issues of its administrative history. Its administration was modified by a law duly incorporated in Justinian's Codex that reflects the intention of the legislator to reconstitute in Africa the ancient Diocletianic administrative system. The re-conquered lands were placed under the civil authority of a prefect, who resided in Carthage, and were divided in seven provinces, Zeugi Carthago (former Africa Proconsularis), Byzacium, Tripolis, Numidia, Mauritania I, Mauritania II, and Sardinia. Five ducats were created for the military protection of Africa, those of Tripolis, Byzacium, Numidia, Mauritania, and Sardinia[1]. The new administrative system failed to serve its purpose of securing these countries and bringing stability. To the contrary, it proved insufficient for the defense of the African provinces, and by the end of the sixth century it was complemented by the creation of the exarchate. The exarch had supreme military command of the armed forces of his territory, and his jurisdiction soon expanded to include civil affairs and administration[2]. The geographic work of

1. *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, v. II: *Codex Iustinianus*, ed. P. KRUEGER, Berolini 1877 [reprinted 1967], no 27.1, 2 (hereafter: CIC II). See D. PRINGLE, The Defence of Byzantine Africa from Justinian to the Arab Conquest. An Account of the Military History and Archaeology of the African Provinces in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries [British Archaeological Reports, International Series, 99.1], Oxford 2001, p. 23 (hereafter: PRINGLE, Defence); C. ZUCKERMAN, La haute hiérarchie militaire en Afrique byzantine, *Antiquité Tardive* 10 (2002) 169-175, here 169-170 (hereafter: ZUCKERMAN, Hiérarchie militaire); CH. DIEHL, L'Afrique byzantine. Histoire de la domination byzantine en Afrique (533-709), Paris 1896, p. 98-101, 119 f. (hereafter: DIEHL, Afrique byzantine); If necessary, the prefect of Africa assumed the military authority of a *magister militum*.
2. ZUCKERMAN, Hiérarchie militaire, 172-173; PRINGLE, Defence, p. 41-42.

George of Cyprus, which dates from the seventh century, reflects further changes in the civil administration of Africa. The most important change was the division of the lands of the former province of Carthago between Byzacia and Numidia, which gave both provinces a long maritime front, Byzacia's opening to the East and to the Libyan Sea, and Numidia's opening to the North and the Tyrrhenian Sea. Thus it appears that the civil territories adjusted to the territories that had been assigned to the *duces*. Some of these changes may be attributed already to the reign of Justinian I and their evolution is detectable in the sources[3].

In the end of the seventh century, Sicily and Africa were included in the warehouse institution. This is attested by one seal for each *ἀποθήκη*. The seal of the warehouse of Africa is dated in 673/4 and is one of the earliest seal examples with *indictio* dating[4]. In charge were Mikkinas and Gregorios, who were also *γενικοί κομμερκιάριοι* of the warehouse of Honorias in that same year[5]. During that time the first Arab blockade of Constantinople was already under way and it is useful to recall at this point some of the main events. In Africa the Byzantines were defeated by the Arabs in 665. A few years later, the Arab leader Uqba undertook a campaign to the Byzantine-Berber mainland provinces. As a consequence, the Arabs were able to proceed a few years later to the foundation of Qayrawan (675), which became their base of operations in

3. E. Honigmann, Le Synekdèmos d'Hieroklès et l'opuscule géographique de Georges de Chypre [Corpus Bruxellense Historiae Byzantinae, Forma Imperii Byzantini, fasc. 1], Bruxelles 1939, p. 54_{638}-57_{684}; Cf. CIC II, no 27.2. See Pringle, Defence, p. 42-43; Zuckerman, Hiérarchie militaire, 171; Diehl, Afrique byzantine, p. 466-474; J. F. Haldon, Byzantium in the Seventh Century, Cambridge 1990, p. 211 (hereafter Haldon, Byzantium). St. Lampakis – Maria Leontsini – T. Lounghis – Vassiliki Vlyssidou, Βυζαντινά στρατεύματα στη Δύση (5ος-11ος αι.). Έρευνες πάνω στις χερσαίες και ναυτικές επιχειρήσεις: σύνθεση και αποστολή των βυζαντινών στρατευμάτων στη Δύση [ΕΙΕ/ΙΒΕ Ερευνητική Βιβλιοθήκη, 5], Αθήνα 2008, p. 68-69 (hereafter: Lampakis – Leontsini – Lounghis – Vlyssidou, Στρατεύματα). In 545/6 the functions of the eparch and the *magister militum* of Africa were finally separated and thereafter these dignities are clearly distinguishable. There is no reason to suppose, as Diehl and Pringle, that the city catalogue of Africa Proconsularis has been lost from the lists of George of Cyprus. To the contrary, George followed the normal exposition style, listing the prefecture first (*Ἀφρική, ὑπὸ τὸν ἐνδοξότατον ἔπαρχον Ἀφρικῆς*), and then Byzacia (*ἐπαρχία Βυζακίας*) with its capital, Carthago Proconsularis (*Καρταγέννα Προκονσουλαρίας*). No other city of Byzacia is styled capital of the province.
4. Morrisson – Seibt, Sceaux, no 17; W. Brandes, Finanzverwaltung in Krisenzeiten. Untersuchungen zur byzantinischen Administration im 6.-9. Jahrhundert [Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte, 25], Frankfurt a. M. 2002, App. I, no 62 (hereafter Brandes, Finanzverwaltung).
5. DO Seals 4, no 6.2; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 331 and App. I, no 64.

Africa[6]. After that point there is no word in the sources about Africa (until 679/80), undoubtedly because the Arabs concentrated their efforts on the siege of Constantinople, which was being prepared in the beginning of the 670s. Theophanes records that the emir Fudhala attacked Cyzicus, were he wintered in 669/70[7]. Arab fleets occupied ports of Cilicia and Lycia and the port of Smyrna in 671/2, thus creating naval bases and securing the narrow straights of the Aegean Sea for the sail to the Propontis. They finally took Rhodes and Cyzicus in 672/3[8]. This advance of the Arabs on the waters of the capital greatly alarmed Constantine IV, who had already, in 671/2, ordered the construction of war ships that anchored in Kaisariou port[9]. It is clear that it would have been very difficult for the Byzantines to deploy naval forces of the Aegean Sea — if, indeed, there were any. With the Arabs controlling the Aegean (and even landing on Crete in 675[10]), the byzantine war fleet could have come only from the West. The seal of the *apotheke* of Africa, dated to 673/4, falls nicely into context. It is also useful to recall that no warehouse of Constantinople operated that year or in the following years. This means simply that the capital would not have supplied the navy with the necessary provisions[11].

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6. Theophanes, *Χρονογραφία*, ed. Ch. de Boor, Theophanis Chronographia, v. I, Lipsiae 1883, p. 352_{13-14} (for the year 668/9) (hereafter: Theophanes). According to Theophanes, there were 80,000 prisoners. See V. Christides, Byzantine Libya and the March of the Arabs towards the West of North Africa [British Archaeological Reports, International Series, 851], Oxford 2000, p. 43-44 (hereafter: Christides, Byzantine Libya); W. Kaegi, Muslim Expansion and Byzantine Collapse in North Africa, Cambridge 2010, p. 226-228 (hereafter: Kaegi, Muslim Expansion); Pringle, Defence, p. 48; A. Stratos, Τὸ Βυζάντιον στὸν Ζ΄ αἰῶνα, v. V: Κωνσταντῖνος Δ΄ (668-685), ἐν Ἀθήναις 1974, p. 24-27 (hereafter: Stratos, Βυζάντιον V); Diehl, Afrique byzantine, p. 567-568, 570-572.
7. Theophanes, p. 353_{7}. In 670 the Arabs once again attacked Carthage. Modern bibliography attaches the attack on Cyzicus to the raid on Carthage and the eighty thousand prisoners that Theophanis reports as taken by the Arabs in 668/9. See R.-J. Lilie, Die byzantinische Reaktion auf die Ausbreitung der Araber [Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia, 22], München 1976, p. 74-75 (hereafter: Lilie, Reaktion); Christides, Byzantine Libya, p. 43; Pringle, Defence, p. 47-48; Stratos, Βυζάντιον V, p. 31-33; Diehl, Afrique byzantine, p. 572-573. It appears that Fudhala retreated from Cyzicus in the spring of 670.
8. Theophanes, p. 353_{14-19}; E. W. Brooks, The Arabs in Asia Minor (641-750), from Arabic Sources, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 18 (1898) 182-208, here p. 187 (hereafter: Brooks, Arabs); Lilie, Reaktion, p. 75-78; Stratos, Βυζάντιον V, p. 33-35.
9. Theophanes, p. 353_{19-23}. On the port of Kaisariou see R. Janin, Constantinople byzantine. Développement urbain et répertoire topographique [Archives de l'Orient Chrétien, 4A], Paris ^{2}1964, p. 227-228, 299, 363. This port is probably to be identified with the port of Theodosius in the Kaisariou district of Constantinople.
10. Theophanes, p. 354_{20-21}; Lilie, Reaktion, p. 79.
11. It would have been impossible for Constantinople to become involved in procuring supplies for

Modern research has already pointed out that the byzantine fleet was active in the western parts of the Empire in the last years of the reign of emperor Constas II[12]. Zuckerman even asserted that the *nauticatio* tax imposed on the population of the West (Calabria, Sicily, Sardinia and Africa) by Constas II aimed at supporting the new naval command of Karavisianoi[13]. It appears that it is no longer possible to maintain the by now quasi-traditional view of Hélène Ahrweiler, that the naval unit of the Karavisianoi was founded immediately after the Arab defeat in the waters of Constantinople in 678[14]. Indeed, it seems that Constantine IV had the Karavisianoi brought from the West and carried over to the Propontis from the ancient diolkos of Gallipolis[15]. In the account of Theophanes it is also possible to detect data on the formation of what was, or became later, an imperial navy[16]. Thus it is understood that in the period 672-678 the greater part of the naval forces of the empire was involved during the sailing period each year in daily warfare against the Arab navy in the Propontis[17]. Unexpected support of this interpretation of the events comes from an independent source, the *Miracula* of Saint Demetrious. In the fourth Miracle of the second collection it is stated that the emperor could dispose of only 10 warships to send to the besieged by the Slavs Thessalonicans, because he was

the fleet at this time, but it is certain that a state granary (*horreum*) was anyway established at Kaisariou. See J. Haldon, Comes Horreorum – Komēs tēs Lamias, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 10 (1986) 203-210, here p. 203-209. The author, however, locates the Kaisariou in the ninth district of the capital. Also see the useful analysis (without any reference to the Kaisariou port) of P. Magdalino, The Maritime Neighborhoods of Constantinople: Commercial and Residential Functions, Sixth to Twelfth Centuries, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2001) 209-226, esp. p. 216. The warehouse of Constantinople began operating in 688/9. See below, note 43.

12. Maria Leontsini, Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄ (668-685). Ο τελευταίος πρωτοβυζαντινός αυτοκράτορας [ΕΙΕ/ΙΒΕ Μονογραφίες, 7], Αθήνα 2006, p. 150-153 (hereafter Leontsini, Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄).
13. C. Zuckerman, Learning from the Enemy and More: Studies in "Dark Centuries" Byzantium, *Millenium* 2 (2005) 79-135, here p. 107 f., esp. p. 117-125 (hereafter: Zuckerman, Studies). Also see S. Cosentino, Constans II and the Byzantine Navy, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 100 (2007) 577-602, esp. 597-601 for the *nauticatio*.
14. Hélène Ahrweiler, Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe-XVe siècles [Bibliothèque Byzantine, Études, 5], Paris 1966, p. 19-31.
15. Zuckerman, Studies, p. 119-120; Idem, A Gothia in the Hellespont in the Early Eighth Century, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 19 (1995) 234-242; Lampakis – Leontsini – Lounghis – Vlyssidou, Στρατεύματα, p. 226-229.
16. Leontsini, Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄, p. 153-154. The bibliography on the Byzantine navy has recently expanded. However, this is not the appropriate place for a detailed account of it, because this issue is connected with the institution of the themes. Therefore I will come back to it in another study.
17. Cf. Theophanes, 353_{28}-354_{5}. According to the chronicler, this situation lasted for seven years. See the comments of Stratos, Βυζάντιον V, p. 35-40; Lampakis – Leontsini – Lounghis – Vlyssidou, Στρατεύματα, p. 234-236.

engaged in war with the Arabs. In this extract it seems that the name of the Karavisianoi navy is concealed under the expression *οἵτινες τῶν καράβων* (*those from the karavoi*)[18].

In the context of the blockade of Constantinople by the Arabs it appears extremely significant that the warehouse of Africa is one of the two warehouses that functioned in 673 along with the *apotheke* of Honorias, which was also managed by Mikkinas and Gregorios. The *apotheke* of Africa is also one of the few that operated during the Arab blockade until 678, in a period when communication with the West was difficult. The other *apothekai* operated at Sebastopolis and in the provinces of Cilicia I, Armenia, Honorias, and Isauria[19]. Indeed it has to be observed that the warehouses of Cilicia I and of Sebastopolis are dated up to 672/3, thus limiting the number of warehouses operating during the blockade to four, Africa included. This conclusion underlines the significance of Africa for the Empire. Not only was it a wealthy province, but it also possessed significant harbors and maintained a long maritime tradition[20]. Its wide spreading commercial activities are manifest in the seal series of *κομμερκιάριοι*. These seals were found in Carthage and date from early in the reign of Heraclius until 647. On them the name of a province appears for the first time. However, these early *kommerkiarioi* seals do not present any other characteristics of the seals of the later *genikoi kommerkiarioi* (such as *indictio* dating and specific reference to the *apotheke*)[21]. The geographic term "Africa" used in the seal inscription of 673/4 refers to Carthage, capital of the former Africa Proconsularis, rather than to the large province of Byzacia. The same terminology is used in the narrative sources of Byzantium to refer to de-

18. P. Lemerle, Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de Saint Démétrius et la pénétration des Slaves dans les Balkans, I-II, Paris 1979-1981, I, p. 213$_{22-25}$; II, p. 120-121. See Leontsini, Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄, p. 154. On the Karavisianoi, a unit recruited from coastal regions, see J.-Cl. Cheynet, La mise en place des thèmes d'après les sceaux: les stratèges, *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 10 (2010) 1-14, here p. 5 (hereafter Cheynet, Mise en place).

19. DO Seals 4, no 6.2, 74.3; ZV, no 149, 153, 154; DO Seals 1, no 86.1; Wassiliou – Seibt, Bleisiegel, no 147; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 58, 59, 61, 64, 65. Cf. Leontsini, Κωνσταντίνος Δ΄, p. 107-109, with a similar approach. The author, however, believes that the warehouse of Africa is connected with commercial activities. Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 329, thinks that the seals dated to this period reflect the changes undergone by the fiscal system, which itself was part of a larger plan to overcome the difficulties that the presence of the Arabs created to the Empire.

20. Christides, Byzantine Libya, p. 18 f.

21. Morrisson – Seibt, Sceaux, no 1-16, esp. no 12 and 16 for the kommerkiarioi of Africa; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 309-312, who brings to attention some more conclusions depending on the interpretation of these seals.

velopments in the former province of Africa Proconsularis[22].

This African province forms the natural "extension" of Italy to the south. Sicily's administrative history in particular is explicitly connected to its excellent geographic position in the Mediterranean. From that position the island provided good bases for any operation to Italy, Africa and the west Mediterranean. In 537, following ancient custom, Sicily was placed under the authority of a praetor and formed a separate ducat[23]. The novel on appellate jurisdiction of Sicily's civil disputes further states that the island was subject to the economic management of the *comes sacri patrimonii per Italiam* and was therefore considered as private property of the emperor[24]. This confirms and underlines Sicily's strategic position in the Mediterranean for the Empire's claims in the West. More than a century later, the Byzantines put into operation Sicily's warehouse. The corresponding seal apparently belonged to Kyriakos, who bore the title *ἀπὸ ὑπάτων* and served as *γενικὸς λογοθέτης* and *γενικὸς κομμερκιάριος* of the *ἀποθήκη* of Sicily in 696/7[25]. It has been plausibly suggested that the military unit of Sicily had already been elevated to thematic status and had been placed under the authority of a *strategos*. This event has been confined to the period 687-695. A list of the early *strategoi* has even been made out[26]. It looks suspiciously as if the creation of the military units of Hellas (695) and Sicily were part of the same reform that was designed not only to facilitate maritime

22. PRINGLE, Defence, p. 49. The Byzantines at this time held on to Carthago, Numidia, and coastal towns up to Septem.

23. *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, v. III: *Novellae*, ed. R. SCHÖLL – G. KROLL, Berolini 1904 [reprinted 1972], no $75_{5\text{-}8}$ (hereafter: CIC III); LAMPAKIS – LEONTSINI – LOUNGHIS – VLYSSIDOU, Στρατεύματα, p. 247 f.; A. GUILLOU, La Sicile byzantine, état des recherches, *Byzantinische Forschungen* 5 (1977) 95-145, here p. 97-98 (hereafter: GUILLOU, Sicile byzantine).

24. CIC III, no $75_{23\text{-}24}$: *Esse enim non indignum putavimus, ut Siciliam nostrum quodammodo peculium constitutum nostrorum particeps consiliorum quaestor sub iurisdictione sua suscipiat.* See M. HENDY, Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300-1450, Cambridge 1985, p. 404-405 (hereafter HENDY, Studies).

25. DO Seals 1, no 5.4; BRANDES, Finanzverwaltung, p. 343-344. The name of the bearer is not clearly visible.

26. N. OIKONOMIDÈS, Une liste arabe des stratèges byzantins du VIIe siècle et les origines du thème de Sicile, *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*, n.s. 1 (11) (1964) 121-130; IDEM, Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles, Paris 1972, p. 351; M. NICHANIAN – VIVIEN PRIGENT, Les stratèges de Sicile. De la naissance du thème au règne du Leon V, *Revue des Études Byzantines* 61 (2003) 97-141; LAMPAKIS – LEONTSINI – LOUNGHIS – VLYSSIDOU, Στρατεύματα, p. 238-239, 256f.; DO Seals 1, p. 22; GUILLOU, Sicile byzantine, p. 103-104; F. WINKELMANN, Byzantinische Rang- und Ämterstruktur im 8. und 9. Jahrhundert. Faktoren und Tendenzen ihrer Entwicklung [Berliner Byzantinistische Arbeiten, 53], Berlin 1985, p. 84-89; CHEYNET, Mise en place, p. 7.

control of the Aegean and Adriatic Seas, but also to support the war in Africa. Moreover, the term "Sicily" carries with it a specific geographic-administrative connotation and signifies the military unit that was instituted there, as well as the civil administrative unit of this great island. This is a case parallel to that of Hellas[27]. In this context, it is not a coincidence that the Sicilian warehouse functioned a year before the final conquest of Carthage by the Arabs (697/8). Thus, even though there can be no direct link of the warehouse to the military unit of Sicily, it is possible to associate it with the campaign of the Byzantines to recapture Africa.

The Arab conquest of Carthage evolved in two phases. At first, the Arabs took over and plundered Carthage thoroughly, the Arab governor Hassan bn. al-Numan al-Ghassani acting under specific orders by the caliph Abd al-Malik, whereby the population was forced to flee to Sicily and Spain. A Byzantine fleet under the direction of the patrician Ioannes drove them away and apparently the army managed to recapture some fortresses. But when the Arabs returned to the waters of Carthage with a powerful fleet, the Byzantines withdrew to Crete and called for reinforcements. Then, the entire operation fell through because of the revolt of the army. In the account of Theophanes these events are limited to one year only, the year 697/8[28], but there is ground to believe that the first phase took place a few years earlier[29], since the seal of the *apotheke* of Sicily is dated to 696/7[30]. If this warehouse was in any way destined to provide support for the Byzantine fleet and army[31], then the Arab attack against Carthage must be dated before 696. The assumption that it was an event of 695 is therefore plausible. Considering that according to the sources the Arab prepa-

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27. On the warehouse and theme of Hellas and its strategic role, see Efi Ragia, The Geography of the Provincial Administration of the Byzantine Empire (ca. 600-1200): I.2. Apothekai of the Balkans and of the Islands of the Aegean Sea (7th-8th c.), *Byzantinoslavica* 69 (2011) 86-113, here p. 97-99 with detailed references (hereafter: Ragia, Geography I.2).
28. Theophanes, p. 370; Nikephoros, *Ἱστορία σύντομος*, ed. C. Mango, Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople, Short History [Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae, 13], Washington, DC 1990, ch. 41 (hereafter: Nikephoros); Christides, Byzantine Libya, p. 47; Pringle, Defence, p. 49-50; A. Stratos, Τὸ Βυζάντιον στὸν Ζ´ αἰῶνα, v. VI: Ἰουστινιανὸς Β´, Λεόντιος καὶ Τιβέριος, 685-711, ἐν Ἀθήναις 1977, p. 88-94 (hereafter: Stratos, Βυζάντιον VI); Diehl, Afrique byzantine, p. 580-586; Lampakis – Leontsini – Lounghis – Vlyssidou, Στρατεύματα, p. 242-243. Most sources date the capture of Carthage in 697/8, the year of the final phase.
29. Kaegi, Muslim Expansion, p. 247-248, also dates the first capture of Carthage to 695/6.
30. Hendy, Studies, p. 657. The warehouse of the Cyclades islands functioned in the same year. See ZV, no 196; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 139.
31. The supply possibilities of Sicily have been excellently resumed in Lampakis – Leontsini – Lounghis – Vlyssidou, Στρατεύματα, p. 248-252.

ration was huge, the capture of Carthage cannot be seen as the spectacular result of a usual Arab raid. This was an expedition targeting the remnants of Byzantine domination in North Africa, Carthage in particular, from which the Byzantines were able to sustain their presence in the numerous forts of the region, control sea traffic in the Western Mediterranean, and indeed influence the decisions of the local population, desert tribes included. In order for the Arabs to consolidate their dominion in North Africa, it was of the utmost importance to expulse the Byzantines from Carthage.

So it becomes very clear that the Arab conquest of Africa is placed in the frame of expansionist policy adopted by the caliph Abd al-Malik after the battle of Sebastopolis[32], which also included the consolidation of Arab power in Armenia. In Africa, after the Arab advance on the wealthy al-Djazirat chersonese in 679/80 and Uqba's legendary campaign that reached the shores of the Atlantic, the Arabs were defeated by allied Byzantine-Berber forces in 683. Uqba was killed, Qayrawan was evacuated, and the Arabs retreated to Pentapolis[33]. Most Arab sources attach the attack on Carthage to the re-capture of Qayrawan, which they date to 697; a single source dates it to 693/4[34]. In any case, this is an event that took place either before 688, or — most probably — after 692[35]. In the 680's the caliph had difficulties in the interior of the caliphate with the defection of the East and Arabia and, in addition, had problems imposing his rule in Syria, while the Byzantines maintained a steady and threatening military presence in the East. All this led Abd al-Malik to come to terms with the Byzantines. In 688 the peace treaty that had been signed by Constan-

32. On the battle see the narrative of Theophanes, p. 365.

33. Christides, Byzantine Libya, p. 45-46; Kaegi, Muslim Expansion, p. 229-237, 243-244; Pringle, Defence, p. 48-49; Stratos, Βυζάντιον V, p. 28-31; Diehl, Afrique byzantine, p. 575-580. Stratos implies that this campaign could not have taken place after 678/9, because the Arabs were under treaty with the Byzantines. Kaegi asserts that the seizure of the Qayrawan region created for the Arabs a pretext for war, because it violated a pre-existing treaty signed in 678. Maria Leontsini is of the opinion (cf. Lampakis – Leontsini – Lounghis – Vlyssidou, Στρατεύματα, p. 164) that peace in Africa was achieved under Justinian II by a treaty different than that of 688.

34. Christides, Byzantine Libya, p. 47 and n. 146; Pringle, Defence, p. 49; Haldon, Byzantium, p. 69-70. Stratos, Βυζάντιον VI, p. 48, 88-89, notes that Abd al-Malik could not dispose of any forces for the siege of Carthage before 694 and thinks that Qayrawan was taken in 695.

35. Unexpected support of the analysis offered here comes from numismatics. It has been plausibly suggested that the mint of Carthage was moved to Sardinia in 692/3, it is therefore not irrational to consider that this precaution was due to the Arab mobilization. See Hendy, Studies, p. 422.

tine IV was ratified by Justinian II and Abd al-Malik[36]. By 692, however, both parties were ready to resume hostilities in the East. Justinian II has been heavily blamed for the breach, but it is true that Abd al-Malik would have much more to gain if he combined his recent victories over his inner enemies with a victory over the Byzantines. Theophanes states clearly that the caliph needed a pretext[37], that Justinian II provided him with, and indeed in a way that chronographers later used against him. In the emperor's view, Abd al-Malik's consolidation of power within the caliphate potentially threatened Byzantium's dominion over Armenia. Thus it seems that the engagement in Sebastopolis was a one-way road for both the caliphate and the Empire. Theophanes' account of the events holds the caliph accountable for the invasion and Justinian II for having provoked it, thus implying that open warfare could have been avoided. In this respect it is significant that neither the caliph, nor the emperor proceeded to actions that would prevent the outbreak of war. To the contrary, they both gave reasons for it. The emperor was certainly not anticipating defeat, but the caliph now had a formal justification to attack. In the aftermath of the battle of Sebastopolis, Byzantium's position was compromised on all fronts: Armenia defected almost immediately, and Qayrawan was probably retaken at this time[38].

Theophanes reflects some of the opposition that Justinian II faced after the battle of Sebastopolis when he writes that the emperor was occupied with his building program[39]. This was an unfair critique. It appears that Justinian II responded to the Arab expansion in the West with administrative measures, by instituting the themes of Sicily and Hellas. In the East the warehouses of Ar-

36. Lilie, Reaktion, p. 101-108; Constance Head, Justinian II of Byzantium, Milwaukee 1972, p. 33-34 (hereafter: Head, Justinian); Stratos, Βυζάντιον VI, p. 29-34. Theophanes, p. 363, records a single treaty in the first year of Justinian's reign.

37. Theophanes, p. $365_{18\text{-}21}$: ... *οὐκ ἐννοήσας, ὅτι τὸ σπουδαζόμενον αὐτοῖς ἦν παῦσαι τὴν τῶν Μαρδαϊτῶν ἐπαγωγήν, καὶ οὕτω διὰ δοκουμένης εὐλόγου προφάσεως λῦσαι τὴν εἰρήνην ὃ καὶ ἐγένετο.* According to the treaty of 688, the Mardaites, a tribe settled in the rugged north Lebanon territories, where supposed to be relocated in Byzantine grounds. This extract by Theophanes reveals that the Mardaites still remained in their land, but it is completely confused to allow a thorough commentary in this place. See Head, Justinian, p. 34-36; Stratos, Βυζάντιον V, p. 46-51; Idem, Βυζάντιον VI, p. 41-42.

38. Pringle, Defence, p. 49, suggests that Qayrawan was re-taken sometime between 686 and 688. However, the Arabs were then under treaty with the Byzantines. On the battle of Sebastopolis and its significance see Lilie, Reaktion, p. 107-110; Head, Justinian, p. 45-51; Stratos, Βυζάντιον VI, p. 39-48.

39. Theophanes, p. $367_{12\text{-}13}$.

menia I and IV were functioning normally even though both provinces were heavily stormed after 692[40]. At the same time it appears that the military competence of the Empire was complemented with the institution of yet another army, that of the Thrakesion theme[41]. Theophanes' account of Justinian's dethronement presents Leontios's coup as an act of personal retribution. Leontios had been imprisoned in 692, presumably after the defeat of Sebastopolis. Now, the recruitment of the Slavs of Bithynia for the battle against the Arabs was the emperor's personal choice. The fact that in the following year the "andrapoda" were relocated to provinces all over Asia Minor implies that they still enjoyed Justinian's trust in spite of the defection of the Slavs to the Arabs[42]. This development leaves open questions about the true role of Leontios, who was probably commander in-chief of the army in the battle of Sebastopolis and was consequently held responsible for its outcome. In 695, however, after having spent three years in jail, he was suddenly recalled to service and was appointed *στρατηγὸς* of the newly created theme of Hellas. For a patrician who had served as *στρατηγὸς* of the Anatolikoi, the most important military regiment of the Empire, this was an unconcealed demotion[43]. Contextual clues to the dethronement of Justinian II, however, imply that there was general dissatisfaction among the aristocracy and the people with the measures of Justinian II[44]. All this formed at least part of Leontios' propaganda against Justinian II: the emperor was defeated at Sebastopolis, took harsh economic measures, particularly afflicting the upper classes and Constantinople's inhabitants — in this conjecture the warehouse of the capital, which began to function in 688/9 may be of some significance[45]—, and scorned the aristocracy, as was clear by his

40. ZV, 164 table 18/2; DO Seals 4, no 74.1; WASSILIOU – SEIBT, Bleisiegel, no 149; BRANDES, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 128, 131. On the Arab raids in Armenia I and IV, see LILIE, Reaktion, p. 110-112.

41. The institution of the Thrakesion theme can be confined to the years 687-695. See EFI RAGIA, The Geography of the Provincial Administration of the Byzantine Empire (ca 600-1200): I.1. The Apothekai of Asia Minor, *Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα* 19 (2009) 195-245, here p. 211-213 with extensive bibliography (hereafter RAGIA, Geography I.1).

42. RAGIA, Geography I.1, p. 209-211.

43. THEOPHANES, p. 368$_{18\text{-}21}$; NIKEPHOROS, ch. 40; HEAD, Justinian, p. 92-96; STRATOS, Βυζάντιον VI, p. 78-82. Also see the comments of HENDY, Studies, p. 655. Leontios' treatment of Armenia before 692 might well have been another reason for his imprisonment. After his operations there anti-Byzantine feelings were stronger than ever and led to its defection in 692/3. See STRATOS, Βυζάντιον VI, p. 34-37, 47-48.

44. THEOPHANES, p. 367-368; NIKEPHOROS, ch. 39. See the comments of HEAD, Justinian, p. 88-91.

45. The first seal of a *genikos kommerkiarios* of Constantinople is securely dated to 688/9. See RAGIA, Geography I.2, p. 87-88.

treatment of Leontios. This is already enough information about one of the most obscure events of the period in discussion, and the developments in the West, on which no hints have been included in the sources, need not be added to the reasons for Justinian's dethronement. In any case, the operation against Africa was on the way in the end of 695 and its capital Carthage soon fell to Arab hands. The new emperor Leontios failed to re-capture it and the army revolted in Crete. Theophanes' argument that their rebellion was due to their shame is of no consequence. Rather, it may be suggested that it is to be attributed to their discontent at the leader of the campaign, who had previously been the emperor's personal choice[46]. In spite of all the anti-Justinianic propaganda, emperor Leontios had not only delayed to deploy the military forces of the Empire for the re-conquest of Africa, but also failed to accomplish it, while on the eastern front his failure to check Arab raids was blatant[47]. Therefore he lost favor with the army and was dethroned (698).

Some New Seals, a Note on "Kato Hexapolis", and Later Seals of the **vassilika kommerkia**

New seals that have been recently brought to light through auctions modify our lists to some extend. A seal belonging to the logothetes Kyriakos proves that the warehouse of Isauria and Lycaonia functioned in 696/7 under the emperor Leontios, and a seal of Synetos and Nicetas shows that the warehouse of Pamphylia and Pisidia operated in 713/4[48]. J.-Cl. Cheynet published two new seals of *στρατηγίαι*, of which the first is a parallel specimen of the seal of the Kibyrraiotai (739/40), and the second is a seal of the *strategia* of the Thrakesioi dated to 744/5[49]. Moreover, Christos Stavrakos has recently brought to the attention of the scientific community a new seal which associates the *διοίκησις* of Hellas to the *βασιλικὰ κομμέρκια*. The seal is dated to 737/8[50]. From the year 736/7 comes one more seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of the *dioike-*

46. Theophanes, p. 370$_{22}$; Stratos, Βυζάντιον VI, p. 94-96; Kaegi, Muslim Expansion, p. 248.
47. See Lilie, Reaktion, p. 112; Theophanes, p. 369$_{33-34}$ asserts that Leontios *παντόθεν εἰρηνικῶς διέμεινεν* ("there was peace all over"), which is directly contradicted by the testimony of the Arabic sources. See Brooks, Arabs, p. 190; Stratos, Βυζάντιον VI, p. 87-88.
48. Cf. *SBS* 10 (2010) p. 161 no 3339, 163 no 2487 and 182 no 1314, 172 no 617 and 181 no 1303. The seal of Cilicia I and II, dating to 700-702, has already been noted in Ragia, Geography I.1, Catalogue, V, 233, map 5.
49. Cheynet, Mise en place, p. 9 no 4, 5.
50. Stavrakos, Sammlung Kophopoulos, p. 6-8. By mistake the seal is published with the chronol-

sis of Andros[51]. In a recent contribution I suggested that it might have been convenient for the *vassilika kommerkia* to function on the basis of the *dioikeseis*[52]. The seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of the dioikesis of Hellas appears to confirm this hypothesis. So far these seals do not allow us to suppose that this was something more than a temporary adjustment of the *vassilika kommerkia* to the dioceses, applied only in the case of the islands and of Hellas.

In the 730s the institution of the *vassilika kommerkia* was fully developed. The resources of Hellas, of the islands of the Aegean Sea, of Thessalonica and of Mesembria, and of the provinces of west Asia Minor were mobilized[53]. In this decade the *vassilika kommerkia* of the Kibyrraiotai functioned at least once (739/40) and of the Anatolikoi at least twice (730/1, 736/7). In Pontus there operated the *vassilika kommerkia* of Kerasous (735/6, 738/9)[54]. The Armenian provinces and Cappadocia had long stopped being represented at the warehouse institution. In this context, the seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Kato (Lower) Hexapolis (741/2) seems to be out of place. In a previous study I accepted the view that this seal refers to the six cities of Armenia I[55]. There is, however, one more ancient Hexapolis, namely the Dorian Hexapolis of the wider Rhodes region. This Hexapolis comprised Cos, Cnidus, Halicarnassus and the three cities of Rhodes, i.e. Ialysus, Cameirus, and Lindus[56]. The Byzantines apparently preferred in this instance to use this term because it signified a region wider than the term Chersonese, which indicated only the chersonese of Loryma and indeed appeared on a seal of 695-697. The use of ancient terms for denoting the detachment of certain regions from the preexisting administrative frame was common administrative practice in Byzantium. To this category falls not only the term Chersonese, but also the term Aigaion Pelagos, used for the

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ogy 736/7 (4th ind). However, this dating would be impossible, because a seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Hellas dated to 736/7 testifies that the *vassilika kommerkia* were not functioning in adjustment to the *dioikesis* of Hellas in that year. The possibility of interchanging terminology for the same institution is inadmissible; this, in fact, would be a practice unknown to the official administrative practice in Byzantium. See *SBS* 5 (1998) p. 138 no 57; Brandes Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 225. On a similar case of alleged interchanging terminology see Ragia, Geography I.2, p. 101.

51. ZV, p. 193, table 34; Brandes Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 226.
52. Ragia, Geography I.2, p. 104-105.
53. Ragia, Geography I.2, Catalogue, III, 111-112.
54. See Ragia, Geography I.1, Catalogue, VII, 235-236.
55. ZV, no 260; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 236; Ragia, Geography I.1, p. 222 and n. 106.
56. A. H. M. Jones, The Cities of Eastern Roman Provinces, Oxford 21971, p. 30-31; *Realencyclopädie* VIII.2, 1386. The coalition was mainly of a religious character.

first time in 711-713 for the islands north of the Cyclades[57]. It follows that the function of a separate warehouse of Lower Hexapolis that would include the straights of the southeastern Aegean between Rhodes and Loryma, Cos and the chersonese of Halicarnassus, roughly the region of Caria that was later assigned to the Kibyrraiotai, would not be outside the provincial administrative practices of Byzantium at this time, and, as we shall see below, would make perfect sense against the historical background of the time. It should also be noted that the year 739/40, when the *strategia* of the Kibyrraiotai appeared, was marked by a Byzantine attack against the Arab naval base of Damietta in Egypt[58].

After 745/6 the seals of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Asia Minor become a rare occurrence. Only the *vassilika kommerkia* of the Anatolikoi function until 776. Seals have been saved for the years 755/6, 758/9, 760/1, 773/4 and 776, portraying a fairly regular function of the institution[59]. In the Balkans the warehouses of Mesembria, Thrake (and Hexamilion) and Thessalonica operated until 787/8, revealing once again a relative delay compared to developments in Asia Minor[60]. After that year the sequel of the seals preserved, terminology, and titles of the owners change significantly. There are three different seal series[61]. The first belongs to kommerkiarioi of Thessalonica and Hadrianople. All the seals, except for one, bear imperial effigy, and all bear *indictio*. They are dated from 787 until 822/3. The last seal of Hadrianople is so far the last of the dated seals and is normally dated to the year 838/9, but according to this classification it might rather be dated to 823/4. This seal is also distinguished by the fact that its bearer was not a simple *kommerkiarios* or *hypatos* and *kommerkiarios*, but a *διοικητὴς* and *kommerkiarios*[62]. The second series belongs to the *vassilika kommerkia* of Thrace, dated to the opening years of the ninth century according to the *indictio*, to which a seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Thrace and Macedonia and a later seal of Develtos can be classified, even

57. DO Seals 2, no 65.1; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 129. See Ragia, Geography I.1, p. 221, n. 103; Eadem, Geography I.2, p. 102-104.

58. ZV, no 261; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 234a; Lilie, Reaktion, p. 152; E. W. Brooks, The Relations between the Empire and Egypt from a New Arabic Source, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 22 (1913) 381-391, here p. 383.

59. See Ragia, Geography I.1, Catalogue, VII, 236.

60. See Ragia, Geography I.2, p. 108 and Catalogue, III, 112.

61. Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 365-368. The author's classification of these late seals is different from that offered here.

62. ZV, no 277, 279 comments; DO Seals 1, no 44.5, 6; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 265, 267, 275, 280.

though they are dated in the years 820/1 and 832/3 respectively[63]. Lastly, a seal series of *vassilikoi kommerkiarioi* of Thessalonica, Thrace and Macedonia, and Sinope dates from 810/1 until 832/3. Three of these seals do not bear imperial effigy but only one is neither with portrait or *indictio*. For this reason it has been considered as private, non official seal of the holder[64]. Of all these seals only the *vassilika kommerkia* of Thrace and Macedonia appear to be the direct continuator of the institution of the eighth century and they probably functioned on a thematic-territorial basis of the themes of Thrace and Macedonia — except for the *vassilika kommerkia* of Develtos, which replaced the vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria in the ninth century[65]. Nonetheless, the twelve years that lapsed, between the last seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of Thrace of 787/8 until the first seal of the ninth century rather indicate that the institution had ceased to operate for several years. The reasons for reinstating in the ninth century the *vassilika kommerkia* institution in north Balkan territories, while at the same time it had disappeared in Asia Minor, are not known, and anything we might suggest must remain a pure assumption[66]. The *kommerkiarioi* or *vassilikoi kommerkiarioi* that appear after 787 point to an evolution of the function of the genikos kommerkiarios, which had disappeared since the late 720s. The (*vassilikoi*) *kommerkiarioi* were not usually operating on a thematic-territorial basis — with a single exception, the *vassilikos kommerkiarios* of Thrace and Macedonia, who was in office in 831/2[67]. They were based in cities, namely in Thessalonica, Hadrianople, and Sinope. The commercial significance of all these cities is well established[68]. On Thessalonica and Hadrianople it can

63. ZV, p. 196, table 34, no 279a-b, 280a, 281, 282, 285a; DO Seals 1, no 43.17, 71.20; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 268, 270, 271, 272, 274, 278.
64. ZV, no 1406, 1712, 2894; DO Seals 1, no 18.34, 35, 43.18; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 273, 277, 279. Hendy, Studies, p. 655, thinks that the seal of Sinope reveals that this city had a strategic role for the theme of the Armeniakon similar to that of Sebasteia, Coloneia/Camacha or Sebastopolis, but this is not proven for the year 832/3. Moreover, the seals of these warehouses of Armenia are dated quite early (see below, Catalogue, II). The seal of Sinope dates from more than a century later, and bears no imperial portrait.
65. Ragia, Geography I.2, p. 90 and n. 21.
66. Hendy, Studies, p. 654 and n. 438, pointed out that there may be a connection of these late seals with military operations against the Slavs of Greece or even with the revolution of Thomas the Slav (821-823).
67. DO Seals 1, no 43.18; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 277.
68. P. Soustal, Thrakien (Thrake, Rodope und Haimimontos) [Tabula Imperii Byzantini, 6], Wien 1991, p. 161-167; A. Bryer – D. Winfield, The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos [Dumbarton Oaks Studies, 20], Washington, DC 1985, p. 69 f.; N. Oikonomides, Le kommerkion d'Abydos, Thessalonique et le commerce Bulgare du 9e siècle, in: *Hommes et*

also be noted that they were thematic capitals. In this conjecture, however, we would be overextending to sustain that "Thessalonica" and "Hadrianople" in this time equal "theme of Thessalonica" and "theme of Macedonia" respectively. This would mean that the administration used in the ninth century different terms to signify specific units, even though it has been proven that the use of interchanging terminology was not practiced earlier. Rather, these *kommerkiarioi* served the needs of trade.

Final Notes and Conclusions

All indications we have point to the conclusion that the institution of the *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* was of purely economic nature. The titles of the functionaries in charge — *the genikoi kommerkiarioi* — as well as the terminology used in seal inscriptions, portray a close relation to, or even dependence on, the economic services of the Empire, such as the *dioikeseis* (a fiscal periphery that facilitated the collection or taxes) or the *genikon logothesion* (the service that was responsible for taxation). This association has been closely examined recently by W. Brandes[69]. We do need, however, to underline the fact that the *ἀποθῆκαι* were functioning on a territorial basis, and this basis was not the thematic but the provincial territorial basis of Later Roman times. Wherever the preexisting administrative frame was not convenient, the Byzantines were quick to ignore it and create new warehouse/*vassilika kommerkia* units. This would mean most probably that preexisting infrastructures of the provinces were being used to serve the purposes set by the government for this in-

richesses dans l'Empire byzantin, v. II: *VIIIe-XVe siècle*, Vassiliki Kravari – J. Lefort – Cécile Morrisson (ed.) [Réalités byzantines, 3], Paris 1991, p. 241-248; Maria Gerolymatou, Αγορές, έμποροι και εμπόριο στο Βυζάντιο (9ος-12ος αι.) [ΕΙΕ/ΙΒΕ, Μονογραφίες, 9], Αθήνα 2008, p. 121, 144-149, 150-151, 208.

69. Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 298-300, 305-309, 312-329, with particular emphasis on the possible orientation towards catering for the army. Brandes believes that the title *genikos kommerkiarios* already betrays a connection to the *genike trapeza*, which initially belonged to the praetorian prefecture. At the end of the seventh century and in the eighth century two *genikoi kommerkiarioi* were *genikoi logothetai* at the same time, namely Kyriakos (696/7) and Theophanes (727/8). See Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 343, 350. On the dioikeseis see F. Dölger, Beiträge zur byzantinischen Finanzverwaltung, besonders des 10. und 11. Jhs [Byzantinisches Archiv, 9], München 1927 (reprinted 1960), p. 70f. On the *dioiketai* see Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 205 f.; Haldon, Byzantium, p. 196-200.

stitution[70]. In that case the abolishment of the previous provincial administrative system would be untimely. A strong indication about this is the fact that administrative practice always returned to established structures after it had with such ease dismantled entire provinces. Besides the Chersonese and the Lower Hexapolis, which normally belonged to Caria, this was also the case of Pylai and Sangarios river (Bithynia), of Chalkedon and Thynia (Bithynia), and of Dekapolis (Isauria), while it appears that the warehouses of Sebastopolis (Armenia II), Korykos (Cilicia I) and Syllaion (Pamphylia) functioned at least once separately from the provinces to which they belonged[71]. So we are in a position to accept that the seals of the *apotheke/vassilika kommerkia* are the most official and valid sample of byzantine government practice in this time. The terminology that the state uses officially to project itself to society during its fiscal/administrative processes cannot be overlooked or disregarded. The seal inscriptions hold the evidence to the transition from the Late Roman provincial administrative model to the middle Byzantine model. These inscriptions make mention of *ἐπαρχίαι* (provinces), regions/cities, *διοικήσεις* (dioceses), and provinces of military regiments (not of themes), of *στρατηγίαι* and of military regiments quite simply (such as that of Thrake and the Anatolikoi), thus revealing the *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* as one of Byzantium's most flexible institutions in general[72].

Having established the institution's territorial basis and flexibility, it is time to turn to some questions that arise from the geographic approach. Perhaps, the most important objection that one can raise about the significance of the *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* is the point of why, if the institution was so important, did it start from the East, thus burdening provinces lying at the center of violent confrontations between Byzantines and Arabs? If the institution was serving taxation purposes, then it makes no sense to tax the population of the border provinces that was exposed to Arab raids on a yearly basis, unless the *apothekai* were indeed connected to the military regiments that were stationed there. Still, objections could be raised regarding the amount of provisi-

70. Such as installations, state warehouses, but also the administrative structures that were originally functioning framed against the ancient provincial organization, which was subject to radical changes since the middle of the sixth century. See Hendy, Studies, p. 627-631; Haldon, Byzantium, p. 196. Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 292-293, assumes that the municipal *horrea* were transferred to state administration with the dissolution of the municipal organization.

71. DO Seals 1, no 86.1; ZV I/1, 149 table 6/1, 158 table 13, no 157, 253; Cheynet, Sceaux, no 26; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 59, 68, 98, 140B, 177, 231.

72. Zuckerman, Studies, p. 128-129. Also see Cheynet, Mise en place, p. 4, 7-8, on the absence of the term *thema* on seal inscriptions.

ons and supplies for the army that could be collected by way of taxation in a rough mountain province, such as Armenia IV, or Isauria[73]. Moreover, the catalogue of the seals classified by territory, which is attached below, makes clear that the warehouses were not operating regularly in each province. Indeed in some cases (e.g. Galatia, Pisidia) it appears that operation was very erratic, while in certain provinces the warehouses functioned on a yearly basis (e.g. Asia, Isauria, Cilicia) for a certain period of time, to continue somewhat irregularly after that. So far no rotation system can be established with any certainty, but groupings of provincial warehouses operating continuously for several years are easily detectable. One more problem that needs to be addressed is how much the terminology used on certain seals of the same period testifies to the specific distinction of the warehouse/*vassilika kommerkia* units of the provinces. The case of the warehouse of Isauria provides the best example of this problem. This warehouse, which functions almost without interruption since 676, is distinguished within a few years in the warehouse of the province, of Dekapolis, of the andrapoda of the province and of the andrapoda of Dekapolis[74]. Other similar examples come from Asia (warehouse of Asia and *vassilika kommerkia* of Asia for the years 695-697)[75], and from the Anatolikoi (*vassilika kommerkia* of the Anatolikoi and of the provinces of the Anatolikoi)[76], while it is possible to extend this reasoning to other warehouses, e.g. of cities within certain provinces. I tend to believe that different geographic or administrative terminology indeed indicates a distinction among different warehouse/*vassilika kommerkia* units, which needs to be investigated further, especially when military forces are implicated.

An association between the military forces of the Empire and the warehouses is attested in seal inscriptions in the beginning of the eighth century. However, it is not proven that this association regards the territorial settlement of the army, which had taken place before that point. Even the first seals of the Armeniakoi (717/8) and the Anatolikoi (736/7), that clearly implicate specific territories assigned to the armed forces of the Empire, make mention of the

73. Cf. Ragia, Geography I.1, p. 199-200.

74. Laurent, Bulletin p. 605, no 13 (Isauria and Dekapolis, 690-692); *SBS* 3 (1993) p. 181 no 2053 (Isauria); Zarnitz, Siegel, no 2 (andrapoda of Isauria and Cilicia, 693/4); Seibt – Zarnitz, Bleisiegel, no 1.3.6 (Isauria and the *andrapoda*, in all probability dated to 694/5); Cheynet, Sceaux, no 26 (andrapoda of Dekapolis, 696/7).

75. DO Seals 2, no 65.1 (Asia, Caria, Lycia, Rhodes and the Chersonese); Laurent, Bulletin, p. 621, no 2 (*vassilika kommerkia* of Asia, Caria and Lycia).

76. After Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 212 (*vassilika kommerkia* of the Anatolikoi, 730/1); DO Seals, no 86.37 (*vassilika kommerkia* of the provinces of the Anatolikoi, 736/7).

provinces of these forces, thus indicating that the warehouses were still operating based on the ancient provincial organization. Inversely, one could argue that the specific reference to the armed forces of the empire on the same seals implies that the warehouses of those provinces were oriented towards serving military needs[77]. It has already been noted that no seals of Armenia and Cappadocia are found dating to the period after 717/8. The warehouses of Lycaonia and Galatia did not function again after the end of seventh century and the provinces of the Anatolikoi appeared after the seals of Phrygia Salutaria stopped being struck, in 736/7[78]. The provinces of south Asia Minor only stopped being represented at the *vassilika kommerkia* institution after the year 739/40, when the first seal of the *strategia* of the Kibyrraiotai appears[79]; the western provinces disappeared after 741/2, to which the first seal of the *strategia* of the Thrakesioi is dated[80]. This is a conclusion valid for the Opsikion as well, even though there is a time lapse of six years between the last seal of Bithynian provinces and the first seal of the provinces of the Opsikion (745/6)[81]. These seals of the warehouses of the provinces of the military regiments of the empire, or of the *vassilika kommerkia* of the *strategiai*, which make no mention of the provinces, dating mostly from the 740s, clearly indicate that the institution's operational basis shifted from the ancient provincial territorial organization to the territorial and military organization of the armed forces of the Empire.

The implications of this change are much more far-reaching than one would expect: it appears that the ancient provincial organization was finally abolished in the last years of the reign of Leo III. The last seal of the provinces of a military regiment is that of the Anatolikoi, dated in 736/7. In 737/8 dates the seal of the *vassilika kommerkia* of the *dioikesis* of Hellas, and in the next year there appears the *strategia* of Hellas[82]. The year 738/9 then, the 6th *indictio*, was the year of the abolishment of the ancient civil province of Hellas, followed by the abolishment of other provinces all over the empire in the next years. In the 740s no more *vassilika kommerkia* of separate provinces/territories are saved, with only one exception, the *vassilika kommerkia* of Kato Hexapolis. If we accept the suggestion made above, that this comes from Hexapolis of Caria –

77. Cf. Zuckerman, Studies, p. 128-132, who believes that this development took place much later. Also see Cheynet, Mise en place, p. 3-4.
78. The reference is cited above, note 76.
79. ZV, no 261; Cheynet, Mise en place, p. 9 no 5; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 236.
80. DO Seals 3, no 2.31; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 237.
81. DO Seals 3, no 39.41; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 239.
82. Stavrakos, Sammlung Kophopoulos, p. 6-8; ZV, no 254; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 232.

Rhodes (meaning the island of Rhodes with the Rhodian Peraia), then we would have to admit that it anticipates the incorporation of this region in the theme of the Kibyrraiotai. This conclusion explains perfectly why in 741/2 two regions were detached from their provinces (a part of Caria and an island until recently belonging to Nesoi) to function separately from the *vassilika kommerkia* of the *strategia* of the Thrakesion, which also operated that year. Similar examples come only from the north extremities of the theme of Thrace, referring namely to Mesembria. It is also necessary to underline the conclusion that the establishment of military regiments in certain *ἐπαρχίαι*, a development that is attested quite early in the beginning of the eighth century does not entail, or necessitate, the abolishment of the civil provincial organization. In other words, this intermediate stage between the ancient provincial organization and the new thematic organization of the provinces, roughly the period from ca. 717/8 to 738/9 is marked with the irreversible decline of the provinces as structures within the Late Roman geographic-administrative frame of the empire and with the growth of the military regiments that become in the end the territorially based military units that later sources so abundantly describe as themes. On the basis of the seal evidence this conclusion appears quite solid. However, it has to be underlined that it concerns those provinces where armed forces were established quite early, meaning Asia Minor, Thrace, Hellas, and Sicily. In the case of Thessalonica the homonymous theme was founded only after the abolishment of the *vassilika kommerkia* of the city, that is, after 783/4[83].

The only case that lies outside the frame described is that of the Opsikion. Its provinces are still attested in the seal of 745/6[84]. At this point it is useful to recall that in the summer of 741, the count of the Opsikion, Artabasdos mounted a coup against the legitimate successor, Constantine V[85]. During the civil war that followed the themes of the Anatolikoi, the Thrakesioi, and the Kibyrraiotai sided with the young emperor[86]. The seals of Kato Hexapolis and of the *strategia* of the Thrakesioi testify to the mobilization of two of these military

83. Ragia, Geography I.2, p. 95-97; Cheynet, Mise en place, p. 13; Zuckerman, Studies, p. 131-132. Cf. Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 387-388.
84. See the observations of Zuckerman, Studies, p. 130.
85. Theophanes, p. 414. On the chronology of the event, dated by Theophanes to the summer of the tenth *indictio* (742) see Ilse Rochow, Byzanz im 8. Jahrhundert in der Sicht des Theophanes. Quellenkritisch-historischer Kommentar zu den Jahren 715-813 [Berliner Byzantinistische Arbeiten, 57], Berlin 1991, p. 144-145; P. Speck, Artabasdos. Der Rechtgläubige Vorkämfer der göttlichen Lehren. Untersuchungen zur Revolte des Artabasdos und ihrer Darstellung in der byzantinischen Historiographie [ΠΟΙΚΊΛΑ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΆ, 2], Bonn 1981, p. 71 f.
86. Theophanes, p. $415_{19\text{-}20}$, $419_{15\text{-}16}$.

forces in the year 741/2, which coincided with the 10th *indictio*, beginning in September 741. Indeed it is a rare occasion to associate any of the *apothekai/vassilika kommerkia* seals with specific events, such as the outbreak of a revolt and the support offered to one of the rivals by the military regiments[87]. It is worth noting that emperor Leo III was undoubtedly all too powerful to experience a strong resistance for the "reform" of 738/9. This is not true of his successor, Constantine V, who inherited the opposition together with the throne. Opposing political forces broke out against him shortly after the death of Leo III, and he had to deal with multiple conspiracies throughout his long reign. This might then be a reason why the Opsikion was treated differently in a set of reforms that certainly took place after 745/6 and affected its strategic role for the Empire and its operational effectiveness[88]. However, this is already a different issue. For now it is enough to conclude that the emperor, who abolished ancient provincial administrative structures and gave rise to a new order in Byzantium, was Leo III, and that his son and heir to the throne, Constantine V, was the emperor who carried out and complemented the reforms.

Sigillographic sources

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DO Seals	J. Nesbitt – N. Oikonomides, Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum, v. 1: Italy, North of the Balkans, North of the Black Sea, Washington, DC. 1991; v. 2: South of the Balkans, the Islands, South of Asia Minor, Washington, DC 1994; v. 3: West, Northwest and Central Asia Minor and the

87. Cf. Cheynet, Mise en place, p. 10.
88. Implied are the reorganization of the palatine guards' regiments and the institution of the *Optimatoi* and the *Bucellarioi*. On these forces see J. F. Haldon, Byzantine Praetorians. An Administrative, Institutional and Social Survey of the Opsikion and Tagmata, c. 580-900 [ΠΟΙΚΊΛΑ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΆ, 3], Bonn 1984; Vassiliki Vlyssidou – Eleonora Kountoura-Galake – St. Lampakis – T. Lounghis –A. Savvides, Η Μικρά Ασία των θεμάτων. Έρευνες πάνω στην γεωγραφική φυσιογνωμία και προσωπογραφία των βυζαντινών θεμάτων της Μικράς Ασίας (7ος-11ος αι.) [ΕΙΕ/ΙΒΕ, Ερευνητική Βιβλιοθήκη, 1], Αθήνα 1998, p. 163 f., 235 f., 245 f.

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Seibt – Zarnitz, Bleisiegel	W. Seibt – Marie-Luise Zarnitz, Das byzantinische Bleisiegel als Kunstwerk. Katalog zur Ausstellung, Wien 1997.
Stavrakos, Sammlung Kophopoulos	Chr. Stavrakos, Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel der Sammlung Savvas Kophopoulos. Eine Siegelsammlung auf der Insel Lesbos [Βυζάντιος, Studies in Byzantine History and Civilization, 1], Turnhout 2010.
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Zarnitz, Siegel	Marie-Luise Zarnitz, Drei Siegel aus dem Bereich der Kommerkia, *SBS* 4 (1995) 181-185.
ZV	G. Zacos – A. Veglery, Byzantine Lead Seals, v. I, Basel 1972.

Catalogue of the Seals of the **Apothekai/Vassilika Kommerkia** *(ca. 650-832) Part 3: Regional Classification*[89]

I. Cappadocia

659-668	Cappadocia I and II
659-668	Cappadocia I and Lower...
681/2	Cappadocia II
683/4 or 686/7	Cappadocia I and II
687/8	Cappadocia I and II
689-91	Cappadociae, Lycaonia and Pisidia
690/1	Cappadocia I and II
690-692	Cappadocia II and Lycaonia
691/2	Cappadocia I
694/5	Andrapoda of Cappadocia I and II

II. Armenia

659-667	Armenia II
668-672/3	Sebastopolis
675/6	Armeniae
674-681	Armenia I or IV
688/9	Armenia II, with Helenopontus
690/1	Armenia I
694/5	Armenia IV
695-696	Armenia I or IV
695-696	Armenia IV
702-704	Koloneia and Kamacha
713-715	Koloneia, Kamacha and Armenia IV
717/8	Koloneia and all the provinces of the Christ-loving Armeniakon

89. In this catalogue there are double or even triple entries concerning mostly central Asian provinces. This is due to the fact that their warehouses often functioned also with those of northwestern provinces (duly considered as Asian neighborhoods of Constantinople), of west Asian provinces, or of south Asian provinces. Publication references are cited here only for the newly published seals and for later seals that complete this presentation series of the warehouses/*vassilika kommerkia*. For the rest, the reader please be referred to the corresponding chronological classifications in the Catalogues in Ragia, Geography I.1 and Geography I.2 under the specific years.

III. Pontus

659-668	Helenopontus and...
659-668	Paphlagonia
673/4	Honorias
674/5	Honorias
679/80	Helenopontus
688/9	Helenopontus
688/9	Helenopontus and Armenia II
689/90	Lazica, Kerasous, Trapezous
689/90	[Kerasous?][90]
691-693	Lazica, Kerasous, Trapezous
692/3	Lazica, Kerasous, Trapezous
692/3	Paphlagonia and Honorias
693-695	Helenopontus
695-697	Vassilika kommerkia of Helenopontus
702-704	Lazica
710/11	Lazica
711-712	Lazica
716/7	Lazica
717	Kerasous
720-741	Littoral of Pontus with Honorias and Paphlagonia
720-741	Honorias, Paphlagonia and the Littoral of Pontus till Trebizond
720-741	Honorias, Paphlagonia and the littoral of Pontus
721/2	Helenopontus, Paphlagonia and Kerasous
727/8 or 728/9	Littoral of Pontus
734/5	Vassilika kommerkia of Krateia, Prousias, Herakleia
735/6	Vassilika kommerkia of Kerasous
738/9	Vassilika kommerkia of Kerasous

IV. South Asian coast

659-668	Isauria
668-672	Cilicia I
676/7	Isauria
679/80	Either Ciliciae
681/2	Isauria
685-695	Cilicia I and II

90. JORDANOV, Collection, no 115. The editor retained the reading “Kerasous”.

687/8	Either Ciliciae
690/1	Korykos and Cilicia
690/1	Isauria
690/1	Pamphylia with Pisidia
690-692	Isauria and Dekapolis
691/2	Cilicia
691-693	Isauria and Lycaonia
692/3	Isauria and...
692/3	Isauria
693/4	Cilicia I and II
693/4	Andrapoda of Isauria and Cilicia
694-696	Cilicia I and II
694/5	Isauria and the andrapoda
696/7	Andrapoda of Dekapolis
696/7	Isauria and Lycaonia[91]
696/7	Cilicia
697/8	Isauria and Lycaonia
700-702	Cilicia I and II[92]
710/1	Isauria
713	Ciliciae
713/4	Pamphylia and Pisidia[93]
718/9	Isauria and Syllaion
719/20	Lycia, Pamphylia and the littoral of Isauria
722/3	Lycia and Pamphylia with Pisidia
739/40	Strategia of the Kibyrraiotai
739/40	Strategia of the Kibyrraiotai[94]

V. Central Asian Provinces

654-659	Galatia
659-668	Either Galatiae
689-691	Lycaonia and Pisidia with Cappadociae
690/1	Lycaonia
690/1	Pisidia with Pamphylia

91. *SBS* 10 (2010), p. 172, no 617, and 181, no 1303. The seal belonged to the *genikos logothetes* Kyriakos.
92. Also in *SBS* 10 (2010), p. 163, no 2487, and 182, no 1314.
93. *SBS* 10 (2010), p. 161, no 3339. The seal belonged to *the genikoi kommerkiarioi* Synetos and Nicetas.
94. Cheynet, Mise en place, p. 9, no 5.

690-692	Lycaonia and Cappadocia II
691-693	Galatia II
691-693	Lycaonia with Isauria
694/5	Andrapoda of Phrygia Salutaria
694/5	Andrapoda of Galatia II
696/7	Lycaonia with Isauria
697/8	Lycaonia with Isauria
713/4	Pisidia with Pamphylia
722/3	Pisidia with Pamphylia and Lycia
727/8	Salutaria with Bithynia and Pacatiana
728/9	Salutaria with Bithynia and Pacatiana
730/1	Vassilika kommerkia of the Anatolikoi
731/2	Vassilika kommerkia of Salutaria with Bithynia and Pacatiana
733/4	Vassilika kommerkia of Salutaria with Bithynia, Pacatiana and Lydia
736/7	Vassilika kommerkia of the provinces of the Anatolikoi
758/9	Vassilika kommerkia of the Anatolikoi
760/1	Vassilika kommerkia of the Anatolikoi
773/4	Vassilika kommerkia of the Anatolikoi
776	Vassilika kommerkia of the Anatolikoi

VI. Asian neighborhoods of Constantinople

659-668	Abydos
673/4	Honorias
674/5	Honorias
679/80	Pylai and Sangarios
691/2	Hellespont
692/3	Honorias with Paphlagonia
694/5	Slav andrapoda of Bithynia
695-697	Nicaea
695-697	Helespont and Constantinople
708/9	Helespont
713/4	Helespont
713-715	Helespont and Arch...
720-729	Hellespont with Lydia
720-741	Honorias with Paphlagonia and the littoral of Pontus
720-741	Honorias with Paphlagonia and the littoral of Pontus
727/8	Bithynia with Salutaria and Pacatiana
727/8	Vassilika kommerkia of Hellespont with Asia and Caria

727/8	Hellepont and Lydia
728/9	Bithynia with Salutaria and Pacatiana
729/30	Hellespont and... [Lydia]
731/2	Vassilika kommerkia of Bithynia with Salutaria and Pacatiana
733/4	Vassilika kommerkia of Bithynia with Salutaria, Pacatiana and Lydia
734/5	Vassilika kommerkia of Krateia, Prousias and Herakleia
738/9	Vassilika kommerkia of Chalkedon and Thynia
745/6	Vassilika kommerkia of the provinces of the Opsikion

VII. West Asian provinces

687/8	Nesoi, Asia and Caria
687/8	Lydia
689/90	Asia and...
690/1	Asia, Chios and Lesbos
691-693	Asia and Caria
691/2 or 695/6	Caria and Lycia
694/5	Andrapoda of Asia, Caria and Lycia
695-697	Asia, Caria, Lycia, Rhodes and the Chersonese
695-697	Vassilika kommerkia of Asia, Caria and Lycia
696/7	Kapatiane and Lydia
713-715	Asia, Caria and Lycia
719/20	Lycia with Pamphylia and the littoral of Isauria
722/3	Lycia with Pamphylia and Pisidia
720-729	Lydia with Hellespont
721/2	Asia, Caria, all the Islands and Hellespont
725/6	Vassilika kommerkia of Asia[95]
727/8	Vassilika kommerkia of Asia, Caria, and Hellespont

95. In *SBS* 5 (1998), p. 54 no 5; ZV, p. 196, table 34; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App I. no 252. This seal was republished very recently in Jordanov, Collection, no 99. It is normally placed in the year 755/6, the 8th indiction, but I have already suggested (Ragia, Geography I.1, p. 236, n. 11) that it should be re-dated much earlier. The 8th indiction corresponds to the years 725/6 and 740/1. Of these chronologies the first is chosen because there would be, according to the analysis attempted above, no separate provincial warehouses after 739. On the contrary, if the placement in time of this seal is correct, then this would be the first seal of the reinstated by Leo III *vassilika kommerkia*. It is quite interesting that Theophanes, p. $404_{4\text{-}6}$, $410_{9\text{-}15}$, dates the financial measures of Leo III that afflicted Italy to this year. About the implications see Zuckerman, Studies, p. 85 f.; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, p. 368 f.

727/8	Lydia with Hellespont
728/9	Pacatiana with Bithynia and Salutaria
729/30	Lydia with Hellespont
731/2	Vassilika kommerkia of Pacatiana with Salutaria and Bithynia
732/3	Vassilika kommerkia of Asia
733/4	Vassilika kommerkia of Pacatiana and Lydia with Salutaria and Bithynia
736/7	Vassilika kommerkia of Lydia
738/9	Vassilika kommerkia of Asia and Caria
741/2	Vassilika kommerkia of Kato Hexapolis[96]
741-742	Vassilika kommerkia of the strategia of the Thrakesioi
744/5	Vassilika kommerkia of the Strategia of the Thrakesioi[97]
745/6	Vassilika kommerkia of strategia of the Thrakesion

VIII. Islands

687/8	Nesoi, with Caria and Asia
687-689	Cyclades Islands
688-690	Crete
690/1	Chios, Lesbos with Asia
695-697	Rhodes and the Chersonese with Asia, Caria and Lycia
696/7	Cyclades Islands
711-713	Aigaion Pelagos
713-714	Aigaion Pelagos
721-722	All the Islands with Asia, Caria and Hellespont
730-741	Vassilika kommerkia of Crete
730/1	Vassilika kommerkia of Melos
734/5	Vassilika kommerkia of the Islands of the Aigaion Pelagos
736/7	Vassilika kommerkia of the dioikesis of Andros
738/9	Vassilika kommerkia of Melos, Thera, Anaphe, Ios and Amorgos

96. It is up till now considered that this seal came from Armenia I, but in the present contribution I suggest that the seal inscription refers to the Rhodian Peraia. It is therefore classified here among the seals of west Asia Minor because the Chersonese of Peraia along with Cnidus and Halicarnassus belonged entirely to Caria.

97. Cheynet, Mise en place, p. 9, no 4.

IX. Thessalonica

713	Thessalonica
723/4	Thessalonica
724/5	Thessalonica
726/7	Thessalonica
727/8	Thessalonica
734/5	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
737/8	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
737/8	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
738/9	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
738/9	Vassilika kommerkia of Salonica
740/1	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
742/3	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
746/7	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
755/6	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
773/4	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
778/9	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica
783/4	Vassilika kommerkia of Thessalonica[98]

X. Hellas and the West

673/4	Africa[99]
696/7	Sicily[100]
698/9	Hellas
730-741	Vassilika kommerkia of Hellas
736/7	Vassilika kommerkia of Hellas
737/8	Vassilika kommerkia of the dioikesis of Hellas[101]

98. Jordanov, Collection, no 105, dates to the year 783/4 a seal mentioned by ZV, p. 196 table 34, and Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 261. The inscription so far remained unread, but Jordanov suggests that it should be read as *τὰ βασιλικὰ κομμέρκια τοῦ Εὐξείνου Πόντου*. Even though this edition is an excellent one and provides very good photographs of the seals under discussion, it is my opinion that Jordanov's reading is to be rejected, because the geographic term "Euxeinos Pontos" is extremely rare in the sources of the period and can have no administrative connotation. To this term, unlike terms so far examined (e.g. of provinces, cities, territories with specific characteristics), no territorial expansion can be assigned, which would serve the function of the *vassilika kommerkia*. Even the term "Aigaion Pelagos", which would be the only equivalent of "Euxeinos Pontos", bears with it a specific territorial and administrative connotation. See Ragia, Geography I.2, p. 102-105.

99. Morrisson – Seibt, Sceaux, no 17.

100. DO Seals 1, no 5.4.

101. Stavrakos, Sammlung Kophopoulos, p. 6-8.

738/9	Vassilika kommerkia of the Strategia of Hellas
748/9	Vassilika kommerkia of Hellas

XI. Constantinople and Thrake

685-695	Constantinople
688/9	Constantinople
690/1	Constantinople
690/1	Mesembria
690/1	Constantinople
691/2	Constantinople
692/3	Constantinople
692/3	Constantinople
693/4	Constantinople
695/6	Constantinople with Hellespont
695/6	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria
696/7	Constantinople
698/9	Constantinople
698/9	Mesembria
700-702	Constantinople
700-702	Constantinople
700-702	Mesembria
Seventh-eighth c.	Constantinople
713	Constantinople
713/4	Constantinople
713/4	Constantinople
713/4	Mesembria
715/6	Constantinople
718/9	Constantinople
720-729	Panion, Madytos and...
720/1	Constantinople
722/3	Constantinople
722/3	Mesembria
723/4	Constantinople
727/8	Constantinople
730-741	Vassilika kommerkia of Constantinople
730-741	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake
730-741	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria
730/1	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria
732/3	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria
735/6	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria

736/7	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria
738/9	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria
741-750	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria with Thrake
747/8	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake
747/8	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria
751-775	Vassilika kommerkia of Mesembria
751/2	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake and Hexamilion
785/6	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake
787/8	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake
800/1	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake[102]
801/2	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake[103]
802/3	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake[104]
810/11	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake[105]
820/1	Vassilika kommerkia of Thrake[106]
832/3	Vassilika kommerkia of Develtos[107]

102. ZV, no 279; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 268.
103. DO Seals 1, no 71.20; ZV, no 280a; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 270.
104. ZV, p. 196, table 34; no 281, n. 4; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 271.
105. ZV, no 281; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 272.
106. DO Seals 1, no 43.17; ZV, no 282; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 274.
107. ZV, no 285; Brandes, Finanzverwaltung, App. I, no 278.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Η ΓΕΩΓΡΑΦΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΑΡΧΙΑΚΗΣ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΗΣ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΙΑΣ (περ. 600-1200): I.3. ΟΙ ΑΠΟΘΗΚΕΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΦΡΙΚΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΙΚΕΛΙΑΣ, ΤΕΛΙΚΕΣ ΠΑΡΑΤΗΡΗΣΕΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΜΠΕΡΑΣΜΑΤΑ

Η παρούσα εργασία χωρίζεται σε τρία μέρη. Το πρώτο ασχολείται με τις αποθήκες Αφρικής και Σικελίας. Η αποθήκη Αφρικής λειτούργησε το 673/4 και θεωρείται ότι μπορεί να ενταχθεί στο πλαίσιο της βυζαντινο-αραβικής αντιπαράθεσης κατά τη διάρκεια του αποκλεισμού της Κωνσταντινούπολης (674-678). Η αποθήκη Σικελίας λειτούργησε λίγα χρόνια αργότερα, το 696/7, και μπορεί να συνδεθεί με την εκστρατεία των Βυζαντινών για την ανακατάληψη της Αφρικής που τελούσε υπό τις διαταγές του πατρικίου Ιωάννη.

Στο δεύτερο μέρος παρουσιάζονται και σχολιάζονται νέες σφραγίδες των αποθηκών και των βασιλικών κομμερκίων που χρονολογούνται από τα τέλη του 7ου αι. ως τη δεκαετία 740 που δημοσιεύθηκαν πρόσφατα. Αναθεωρείται η άποψη, σύμφωνα με την οποία η σφραγίδα της Κάτω Εξαπόλεως (741/2) προέρχεται από την επαρχία Αρμενίας Α΄. Προτείνεται αντιθέτως ότι αυτός ο σπάνιος γεωγραφικός όρος αναφέρεται στην αρχαία Δωρική Εξάπολη, δηλαδή στις πόλεις της Κω, Αλικαρνασσού, Κνίδου, και της Ρόδου (Ιαλυσός, Κάμειρος, Λίνδος). Τέλος, παρουσιάζονται οι σφραγίδες που σχετίζονται με τον θεσμό των αποθηκών/βασιλικών κομμερκίων οι οποίες χρονολογούνται μετά το 787/8.

Το τρίτο και τελευταίο μέρος της μελέτης είναι αφιερωμένο σε γενικά συμπεράσματα από την γεωγραφική επισκόπηση της επαρχιακής διοίκησης από τα τέλη του 7ου αι. ως τα μέσα περίπου του 8ου αι. Επισημαίνονται προβλήματα που προκύπτουν από την ερμηνεία και το περιεχόμενο που έχει δώσει η νεότερη έρευνα στον θεσμό των αποθηκών/βασιλικών κομμερκίων και πιστοποιείται ότι η περίοδος περ. 717/8-738/9 ήταν η περίοδος μετάβασης από το παλαιότερο υστερορρωμαϊκό σύστημα επαρχιακής διοίκησης στο νέο σύστημα «θεματικής» διοίκησης των επαρχιών. Τη μελέτη συμπληρώνει κατάλογος των αποθηκών των επαρχιών του Βυζαντινού κράτους, οι

οποίες κατατάσσονται πλέον κατά περιφέρειες και διευκολύνουν την κατανόηση των συμπερασμάτων της παρούσης εργασίας.

ΕΦΗ ΡΑΓΙΑ